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Centennial memoirs of St. John the Baptist Church, New Haven, IN

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Centennial Memoirs

of

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St. John the Baptist Church

New Haven, Indiana

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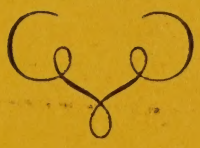

1859 - 1959

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To celebrate the 100th anniversary in a spiritual way, we will have

A High Mass, October 9, 1959 for all living who have been or still are, members of the Parish;

A High Mass, October 10th, for all deceased parishoners;

A High Mass of Thanksgiving, October 11th;

Our school children will celebrate the event, October 12th;

The adult observance will be on Tuesday evening, October 13th.

We aim in this short sketch to bridge a distance of 100 years, a pleasurable reminiscence for our older parishoners, and an inspiration to our present membership. The historical data has been compiled from diocesan historical records, from available parish records, and from access in the Fort Wayne Court House, to the "History of Allen County".

BISHOPS OF THE FORT WAYNE DIOCESE

Most Rev. John Henry Luers, D.D.,	1858-1871
Most Rev. Joseph Dwenger, CPPS, D.D.,	1872-1893
Most Rev. Joseph Rademacher, D.D.,	1893-1900
Most Rev. Herman Joseph Alerding, D.D.,	1900-1924
Most Rev. John Francis Noll, D.D.,	1925-1956
Most Rev. Leo Aloysius Pursley, D.D.,	1956-

PASTORS OF ST. JOHN'S, NEW HAVEN

Rev. Wolfgang Giedl	1861-1873
Rev. Bernard Wiedau	1873-1921
Rev. Michael J. Aichinger	1921-1926
Rev. Francis Faust	1926-1939
Rev. William J. Ehrman	1939-

ASSISTANT PASTORS OF ST. JOHN'S

Rev. Herman J. Schnurr	1939-1940
Rev. Michael Vichuras	1940-1946
Rev. Lawrence Gollner	1946-1947
Rev. Henry J. Ameling	1948-1956
Rev. Paul Miller	1956
Rev. Thomas E. Doriot	1956-

Early History Of The Territory

(From "History of Allen County" published in 1880). "As early as 1611, French priests of the Franciscan and Jesuit Orders worked among the Miami Indians, near Fort Wayne. Kekionga (which means blackberry patch), the former name for Fort Wayne, was visited by priests in 1669. A military and trading post was established along the Maumee River in 1672, and the following year, Father Marquette founded a Catholic mission. General Harmer took possession of Fort Wayne, October 21, 1790; the American flag flew from Fort-Fort Wayne, Oct. 22, 1794. An act of the legislature, Dec. 17, 1823, established a new County in Indiana; it was named "Allen", in memory of Colonel John Allen of Kentucky. The first road built was known as "Wayne Trace", extending to Fort Recovery, Ohio. The first County road was the "Winchester" Road, running due south. On June 12, 1867 the New Haven Grand Pike Company was organized; it built a road that was six miles long. It was declared to be 'the best road in the State, constructed wholly of river gravel, at a cost of $3,000.00 a mile' ".

"Wayne Township and Allen County were synonymous in 1824. Adams Township was created in 1826 and given definite boundaries in 1830. A permanent settlement was made on the present site of New Haven in 1823. The township was named to honor President John Q. Adams. The first public free school was opened to pupils in 1858".

(From biography of Monsignor Julian Benoit, V.G.). "Father Benoit arrived in Fort Wayne April 16, 1840, to found mission churches as well as to care for the many sick at the time of the building of the Erie Canal. His missionary work extended to NEW HAVEN, Besancon, Hessen Cassel, Decatur, LaGro, Huntington, Columbia City, Lima (in LaGrange County), and Avilla. Sick calls were made to patients, as far away as Muncie".

Early Catholic History

THE "OLD CHURCH"

Though New Haven was not incorporated until July 7, 1866, the Catholics were cared for spiritually by resident Fort Wayne priests. Early in 1858, Father Alexius Botti held services alternately in the home of Nicholas Schuckmann, and in a dry goods store owned by Messrs. Bueter and Schnelker. He came once a month to minister to a congregation of ten families. A brick Church was erected (where the convent now stands) in 1859 at a cost of $4,000.00, and used until 1876. The cornerstone was laid October 28, 1860 by Bishop Luers, and dedicated by the same prelate Nov. 10, 1861; its administrator was Father D. Grevin who resided at St. Vincent's, on the old Auburn Road. There were now 23 families, with a total of 120 souls.

The first recorded baptism in the "old Church" was that of Anna Adelaide Schnelker, daughter of Herman and Louise Trentman Schnelker, Aug. 4, 1861; she died at the age of 16 on Oct. 27, 1877, and by coincidence, hers was the last funeral from this Church. The last baptism in this Church was Emma Schlink, daughter of George and Teresa Golekee Schlink on Nov. 3, 1877 (she married John A. Sarrazen Oct. 10, 1899). The first recorded wedding was between Conrad and Mary Eve Ehinger, Nov. 5, 1861, and the last nuptial was between Joseph Begue and Adelaide Klassen, Aug. 22, 1877. The first burial was of Bernard Schnelker, infant son of Reinhart and Elizabeth Schnelker, April 29, 1862.

THE PRESENT CHURCH

With the growth of a stable and thriving parish, Father Wiedau began to collect funds for a new Church. You worship in that Church now. It was 56x136, built at a cost of $16,000.00, solemnly dedicated November 11, 1877, with a seating capacity of 450. In 1907, the parish had 114 families, with a total of 508 souls. The first baptism was that of Joseph A. Kallmyer, Nov. 11, 1877; the first marriage was between Fred Vodde and Dinah Woehnker on May 21, 1878; and the first burial was that of Bernard Joseph Welling, Nov. 17, 1877. During the pastorate of Father Aichinger, the basement under the Church was dug out and a new heating system installed. A new Kilgen Organ was purchased in 1940. The Church was frescoed in 1939 by Gaffer Studios, and again in 1954, after a disastrous twenty thousand dollar fire on Palm Sunday. When finances permit, a new Church, seating about 700 persons, will be built.

SCHOOLS

The first school, with one male teacher, opened in 1864; it still is in existence, but as a small home, and located at 1008 Powers Street. Then a brick school, 40x56, and costing $8,000.00, was built in 1872. The Sisters of St. Agnes took charge of the school in 1873.

Ground was broken May 19, 1949 for the PRESENT school. The building committee, consisting of the three church trustees Herman Schnelker, Sr., Edward A. Becker and Alfred Federspiel, together with Edwin Schuckel, Bernard Mack, Ferdinand Bruder and Eugene Schlink, met with the pre-

sent pastor for the first time on June 22. 1947, to consider the construction of a new convent and a new school. Mr. LeRoy Bradley was chosen as the architect. The convent was built first. Immediately thereafter, construction of the school began. The NEW school was opened to the public for inspection and visitation June 11, 1950; school was held in it for the 1950 September term. It is 85x145. The cost was $165,000.00; all of the school was on one floor. The exterior is beautiful because of its simplicity; the interior contained all the latest advancements in schoolroom construction.

Learning that several subdivision residential plots were to be opened, it was decided to anticipate a steady increase in school population. Hence, the above trustees and building committee, with a new member (Leo Vodde) added, met in 1956. Bids for an additional story over the whole school, was let July 26, 1956. This two-story building was ready for occupancy in September of 1957. The addition cost $140.000.00. The school will long stand as an emblem of the many sacrifices our parishoners made. A city block has now become a splendid playground for the pupils, and it also serves as a parking place during divine services.

THE CONVENT

When the Sisters of St Agnes came here in 1873 to take charge of the school, they made their home in the old brick schoolhouse. When the present Rectory was built, the Sisters moved into the brick house which up to that time had been the home of Father Wiedau. That home had to be torn down to make room for the NEW School. The building committee met June 22, 1947 to consider the building of a new Convent. Ground was broken May 18, 1948. Open-house inspection of the Convent was Feb. 13, 1949. It cost nearly $60,000.00. It is a worthy home for our Sisters.

RECTORIES

The first Rectory, built where the NEW school now stands, was erected by Father Giedl in 1861. Father Wiedau lived there until 1921.

In 1921, the present Rectory was built under the direction of Father George Moorman (then pastor of Besancon). However, upon its completion, Father Aichinger was appointed Pastor of St. John's. The same Rectory has been the home of Father Faust and Father Ehrman.

PASTORS

In the hundred years of existence of St. John's, there have been but five pastors. Four of them have gone to their eternal reward. Father Giedel was the first resident pastor, his appointment effective in 1861. He also cared for Columbia City, as a mission parish. His death occurred May 23, 1873, after contracting pneumonia while on a sick call. His remains rest beneath the Crucifixion group in St. John's Cemetery.

His successor in 1873, was Father Bernard Wiedau, and his spiritual activities covered almost half a century. He built the church that is still in use today; also the old school in which your children for almost 75 years received their education. When he retired in 1921, the parish was free from debt. For ten years he resided in a cottage, built by Bishop Noll for aged priests, near St. Vincent Villa. He died in 1932, at the advanced age of 91.

Father Michael Aichinger came to New Haven from Auburn in 1921. Many old-timers remember his congeniality, and because of his friendliness, broke down religious friction. He traded places with ——

Father Francis Faust in 1926, who had been pastor in Logansport. His was a soul that would have made a St. Francis of Assissi, happy. With childlike simplicity he performed his pastoral duties; his sympathetic understanding of those who had crosses to bear, was remarkable. But the burdens of a growing parish were too heavy for his frail shoulders, and so he acceptained the chaplaincy of the Sisters at Victory-Noll, Huntington. He died in 1944, five years after his pastorate in New Haven.

Eulogies and monuments are for the departed. Your present pastor, Father William J. Ehrman, has been among you since July 8, 1939. If he has done anything noteworthy for the progress of the Catholic Church and for the Catholic people of New Haven, then let it find expression in your prayers, that as long as God permits him to remain among you, he will consider all of you as his parishoners on an equal basis, and that he will be an ideal in all the things that will bring you, his sheep and lambs, closer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the love of His Sorrowful Mother.

OUR TEACHERS

Through the kindness of Mother Rosita, CSA., a rather complete list of Sisters, who taught at St. John's, has become available (except for the first 20 years). Only the Superiors are given for the years 1893 to 1913. Sisters M. Bonaventure (S) 1893; Clementine (S) 1906; Juliana (S) 1913; Those who came to teach here between 1913-20: Sisters Josepha, Edwin, Herman Joseph, Julia (S), Borgia (S), Madeline, Hilda, Clarina, Bertrand, Leonissa, Lucille (S), Florentine;

1920-1930 include: Sisters Inez (S), Agnes Marie, Francesca, Loretta (S), Peter Claver, Julitta (S), Aniceta, Francis Xavier, Antoinette, M. Frances, Winifred (S), Augusta;

1930-1940: Sisers Florence (S), Amata, Edwin, Ancilla, Maura, Gerard (S), Mary Clare, Pascaline (S), Aquila (S), Rita Marie, Veneranda, Theodine, Vivian, Edna, Aemeliana;

1940-1950: Sister Paulita (S), Francis Paul, Alma Rose, Amelia, Leota, Germaine, Anna Marie (S), Agnes Marie, Bonaventure, Marietta, Reinalda, Francis Marie, Rosaline, Octavia (S);

1950-1959: Sister Agnes Clare, Francis de Sales, Rose de Lima, Vida, Luella, Carl, Lillian (S), Dennis, Amabalis, Mary Frances, Alice Marie, Maureen, Mary Christine, Louise, Paul Ann, Rachel, Terese, Basilla, Colombiere (S), Rose Marie, Paul Marie, Mary Magdalene.

The following lay teachers have augmented our teaching staff since 1955: Mrs. Iona Bensman, Carole Mourey Conley, Mrs. Vera Miceli, Elaine Hansgen, Marion Berning Tarr, Cecilia Weaver, Ruthie Castle Groves.

At the present writing, St. John's grade school has an enrollment of 401 pupils.

SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

At the time of the centennial celebration, our Holy Name Society has 320 members. The officers are: Carroll Blackwell-P; Robert Jacquay-VP; Hubert Sorg-S; George McKenzie-T.

The Altar Sodality has 315 members, and its officers are: Virginia Rudolph-P; Thelma Hoetzer-VP; Theresa Gabet-S; Virginia McKenzie-T.

The Chief Ranger of the MCOF is Fred Larson; they have 150 members; Frances Schuman is Chief Ranger of the WCOF, and they have 75 members. Junior Foresters total 60.

Active members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society include: Russell Brothers, Joseph Buchtman Jr., Charles Gabet-VP; William Hiatt, Clarence Kruse-T; Fred Larson, George McKenzie, Earl North, John Obringer, Glenn Rosswurm, Raymond Snyder-P; Norbert Witte-S.

The chairman of NCWC activities is Suzanne Gatz.

Present members of our CCD include: Cecil Andorfer, Rita and Rose Barweiler, Ann Lyons, Ruby Newbauer, Marcella Scheiner. We will have more members, when aspirants finish the required course.

Choir members at this time: John Heiny, William Jones, Edward Keever, John Karthol (Director), Meinrad Kever, James and Robert Klotz, Robert Kocks, John Momper, Jerome Nichter, Donald Nommay, John Obringer, Glenn Rosswurm, Ed Sarrazine, Norbert Witte. Sister M. Louise, CSA., is the organist.

CYO events are planned and arranged by Father Thomas E. Doriot, Stephen Obringer, MaryBeth Herbst, Joan Kock, Gerald Jacquay.

The St. John's Benevolent Society, organized in 1866, was disbanded last year, A Rosary Group, head by Ruth Momper, has about 20 members.

Parish Trustees at this time: Herman J. Schnelker, Sr., Alfred Federspiel, Leo Vodde.

St. John's maintains its own Catholic Cemetery. Its officers are: Herman J. Schnelker, Sr.,-P; Leo B. Vodde and Eugene Ehinger-VPs; The Pastor is Secy-Treas.; Edward Brockhaus is the sexton in charge of all burials. The oldest person resting in our Cemetery was an Elizabeth Coonrod, born in 1779.

THOSE WHO HAVE CHOSEN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

St. John's had been in existence ninety years before we were blessed with an ordination to the Holy Priesthood. At this time, we claim with joy Father Alvin Herber, CPPS, ordained in 1950; Father Leo Herber, CPPS, 1952; Father Donald Isenbarger, 1955; Father James Rose, 1957. There are now six students in major and minor Seminaries.

Robert Coonrod was professed as a Holy Cross Brother, Notre Dame, 1951. In our history of Sisters in religious life, we include those who were either baptized at St. John's, or were parishoners here when they left for the convent. This list contains 36 names. For identification purposes, we also give the family name.

SISTERS OF ST. AGNES: Sr. M. Magdalen (Mary Callahan); Sr. M. Pascaline (Louise Andre); Sr. M. Edward (Clara Lee); Sr. M. Leo (Mary Ankenbruck); Sr. M. Dionysius (Margaret Cooney); Sr. M. Pius (Adeline Schurman); Sr. M. Immaculata (Elizabeth Zurbuch); Sr. M. Eugenia (Anna

Ankenbruck); Sr. M. Regis (Honora Callahan); Sr. M. Fabian (Mary Lee;) Sr. M. Teresa (Cecilia Ankenbruck); Sr. M. Aquinata (Agnes Schuckman); Mother Angeline (Margaret Kamp); Sr. M. DeChantal (Margaret Welling); Sr. M. Florence (Mary English); Sr. M. Beata (Catherine Mahoney); Sr. M. Charlotte (Fabiola Bickel); Sr. M. Bernice (Catherine Huth); Sr. M. Gerard (Irene Smith)); Sr. Jane Frances (Aquinata Bueter); Sr. M. Thomas (Anna English); Sr. M. Jane (Regina Zurbuch); Sr. M. Gerald (Genevive Vodde); Sr. M. Borgia (Alice Tibbet); Sr. M. Leon (Lucille Snyder); Sr. Jane Cecilia (Marceil Vodde); Sr. M. Jocile (Rosemary Rosswurm); Sr. Glenn Marie (Barbara Rosswurm); Sr. M. Thaddeus (Felice Federspiel).

SISTERS OF CHARITY: Sr. James Marie (Margaret Moriarty).

SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE: Sr. M. Manetta (Olive Schnelker).

SISTER OF HOLY NAMES OF JESUS & MARY: Sr. M. Cyril (Minnie May).

SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME: Sr. Herman Joseph (Eleanor Ehinger); and Sr. M. Brigid (Catherine Mattingly).

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS: Sr. M. Clarita (Alma Louise Denzel); and Sr. M. Myron (Patricia Girardot).

There are also three girls as aspirants to the religious life.

VITAL STATISTICS

Years	Baptisms	Marriages	Burials	1st Communions	Confirmed
1861-1870	317	29	72	No record	No record
1871-1880	308	38	164	No record	85
1881-1890	247	30	85	No record	122
1891-1900	190	46	108	65	191
1901-1910	176	33	83	35	116
1911-1920	156	30	77	No record	122
1921-1930	191	50	63	66	153
1931-1940	175	77	84	174	226
1941-1950	482	116	124	246	296
1951-1959	715	101	132	435	491
Totals	2,957	550	992	1,021	1,802

*There have been 41 golden jubilees

* * * * * * * * * *

The Sorrowful Mother Novena, begun on the Feast of the Seven Sorrows, September 15, 1939, is still held on Friday evenings.

* * * * * * * * * * *

During the last complete year (1958), 77,019 Holy Communions were distributed.

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A short yet complete report on our building program (as of Jan. 1, 1959).

Total cost building convent and school in 1948 and 1949	$220,000.00
Contract for second floor school addition 1956 and 1957	135,000.00
Additional constructions made, when 2nd floor was added	36,500.00
	391,500.00
Paid on our building program as of January 1, 1959	211,500.00
Building debt unpaid January 1, 1959	180,000.00
Cash balance January 1, 1959	4,000.00
Net debt remaining January 1, 1959	176,000.00
Per-capita debt per parishoner January 1, 1959	93.76
Per-capita FAMILY contributions on NET receipts	121.74

* * * * * * * * * * *

Catholic families: both mates Catholics and both attend Church	390
Mixed M. families: one mate is Catholic and does attend Church	70
(January 1, 1959): Total number families, who do attend Church	460
Total number of souls, who do attend Church	1,877

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AMDG

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Rev. Wm. J Ehrman left St Johns
In June 1964

He was succeeded by Rev. Edward Rosway
who remained until June 1970
He was succeeded by Rev. Richard Wehrine
who remained until Jan 1972
He was succeeded by Rev. Paul Miller
present pastor who supervised the
building of a new church, consecrated
in April 1975 and built entirely
free of debt.

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